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From the presence of these small abdominal ribs Williston concludes that: "This character adds another evidence of the relationship between the Procolophonia and Labidosaurus, and destroys its value as a group distinction." Broili, on the other hand, sees closer relationship between the Cotylosauria and the Stegocephala.

The Oldest Known Reptile.¹—Dr. S. W. Williston has recently redescribed the type specimen of the oldest known reptile. This form, which Williston proposes to call *Isodectes copei* sp. nov., was doubtfully referred by Cope to the genus *Tuditanus*, but subsequently he referred it to the Texas genus *Isodectes*. It certainly does not belong in *Tuditanus*, and while there is no positive evidence that the form belongs in the genus *Isodectes* it seems well to leave it there until the characters of *Isodectes* are better known. The specimen is No. 4457 of the U. S. National Museum. It is preserved in a block of soft coal from the Linton mines of Ohio which have furnished nearly all of the remains of Carboniferous quadrupeds yet known in North America. The Linton mines were undoubtedly located well down in the Pennsylvanian and there has not yet been described a reptile from a lower horizon. The affinities of the form are doubtful though its close relationship to the Microsauria is well established. The intercentral attachment of the ribs and the apparent loss of the hypocentra in *Isodectes copei*, may require a revision of the theory of the formation of the reptilian vertebræ. The absence of abdominal ribs in this form is significant in the light of the recent discussions of the relationships of the early reptiles.

The Age of the Gaskohle.—Students of vertebrates the world over have become accustomed to accepting Fritsch's interpretation of the age of the Gaskohle of Bohemia as Permian. It is with some surprise, though not a little gratification, to note that through the recent studies of European geologists and paleontologists the deposits in Bohemia are now being regarded as Upper Carboniferous. The facts and arguments are well set forth by Broili¹ in a recent discussion on *Sclerocephalus*. Besides thus adding to the stratification of the forms of Amphibia the new fact is thus brought out that the large form *Sclero-*

¹ *Journ. Geol.*, Vol. XVI, No. 5.

¹ *Jahrbuch d. K. K. Geol. Reichsan.*, Bd. LVIII, H. I.

cephalus, which is possibly temnospondylous, occurs first in the Upper Carboniferous. A close parallel of this is found in the discovery of *Eryops* by Case² in the Upper Pennsylvanian of Pennsylvania. The progress of discovery is thus forcing further and further back into geological time the origin of the Amphibia. We now know nearly all of the types of the so-called Stegocephala from the Carboniferous and some of them occur well down in the system.

The results given by Broili are based in large part on the geological and paleobotanical studies of Weithofer and Feistmantel. The report is a lengthy one and occupies some twenty pages, including lists of the vertebrates and the plants which occur in the "Gaskohle schichten."

Bison occidentalis.—In the last issue of the *Kansas University Science Bulletin* Dr. C. E. McClung¹ has described and figured a mounted skeleton of *Bison occidentalis*. This specimen was first noted by Williston in 1902.² It was later³ described by Stewart as belonging to the species *B. antiquus* which is now assigned to *B. occidentalis*. The skeleton has only recently been mounted by Mr. H. T. Martin and is noteworthy as being the only mounted skeleton of a Pleistocene bison. The specimen is further noteworthy because of an arrow point found under the right scapula as if it had been imbedded in the flesh before death. From his study of the mounted skeleton Dr. McClung reaches the conclusion that the extinct species was of a more cursorial type than is the modern *Bison bison*.

Nectosaurus.—Three years ago Dr. J. C. Merriam¹ gave to the world a memoir on a peculiar group of marine reptiles which he had discovered in the Triassic rocks of California and to which he gave the appropriate name of Thalattosauria. He has recently² added to the knowledge of the Thalattosauria by additional notes on the anatomy of Nectosaurus. From his recent studies Merriam concludes that Nectosaurus is a shore dwelling form and the evidence seems strong enough to warrant

² *Annals Carnegie Museum*, Vol. IV, No. III-IV, 1908.

¹ *Kans. Univ. Sci. Bull.*, Vol. IV, No. 10.

² *Amer. Geol.*, Vol. XXX, International Congress of Americanists, 1902.

³ *Kansas Univ. Quarterly*, 1897.

¹ *Memoirs Calif. Acad. Science*, Vol. V, No. 1.

² *University of California Publications, Geology*, Vol. 5, No. 13.